

As a newly upgraded General-class operator whose primary interest in upgrading is A3E dual sideband full carrier amplitude modulation (AM) HF operation, I absolutely and vehemently oppose this measure. One of the primary reasons for operation in the A3E mode is the vastly superior audio quality of the mode, and a necessary adjunct of this mode is somewhat less efficient use of spectrum. Operators that regularly use the A3E mode of emission generally agree that 5-6kc of bandwidth are required for a solid communications-grade signal vice the 3-3.5kc for a similarly serviceable SSB signal. Due to this lesser efficiency, A3E full carrier dual sideband operation on the more occupied VHF bands is for all intents and purposes a dead issue. In the 6 meter VHF band, 50.400 Mc is the only frequency where sustained AM operation can still be heard and I am unaware of sustained A3E operation in or above the 2 meter Amateur band. Another reason that some operators still use this less efficient mode of operation is to hone their electronics skills in restoring classic amateur transmitters and transceivers manufactured before the advent of solid-state technology. Also, many AM operators homebrew transmitters purposely using vacuum tube technology to hone their electronics skills. A small minority of amateurs have acquired former AM broadcast band transmitters and converted these to operate in the 160 and 75-meter Amateur bands. For my part, I have acquired a vacuum tube amateur transceiver due to its very affordable cost. Also worth noting is that the AM Windows, the frequencies allocated to A3E operation by gentlemen's agreement, are at most 10-15kc wide, and that AM operators are extremely disciplined in keeping their operation in the existing windows. In 6 years of licensed operation, and roughly 20 years of shortwave broadcast monitoring, I have never heard an amateur A3E signal on the HF bands outside the recognized AM windows. Given the high level of technical expertise amongst hams in general and AM operators in particular, keeping with the existing bandplans and good amateur operating practice are the best ways to get maximum use out of our existing HF spectrum. I respectfully request that this petition be denied.